

EXPLORING ADOLESCENT IDENTITY FORMATION IN A SCHOOL CONTEXT

by

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DECLARATION

"I declare that:

**EXPLORING ADOLESCENT IDENTITY FORMATION IN A SCHOOL
CONTEXT**

is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references."

Therese Jeanette Stoop

November 2005

I DEDICATE THIS THESIS TO MY LATE PARENTS

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SUMMARY:

EXPLORING ADOLESCENT IDENTITY FORMATION IN A SCHOOL CONTEXT

The comprehensive evidence presented by a number of researchers established that the nature of the classroom environment has a potent influence on students' academic, social and psychological development. This thesis set out to advance the idea that taxonomy of relevant optimum conditions for identity development can serve to illuminate thinking and research on the impact of the classroom environment on identity development in adolescence.

A systems approach was used. The subjects were Grade 11 pupils of a high school in Gauteng. They completed questionnaires in paragraph format, and case studies were conducted with five students. Questions relating to their classroom environments were asked. The unit of study was primarily the classroom, but since the classroom is part of the larger school system, aspects of the school environment were explored as well.

Positive and negative elements in the classroom environment, that enhance or hamper identity development, were identified. Recommendations were made to improve the classroom environment in order to create an environment that is conducive to identity development, and ultimately, academic achievement.

Key words:

Adolescent, adolescence, identity, identity formation, identity development, school, school context, school environment, classroom environment, school system.

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